

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

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FM AMCONSUL WINNIPEG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2341

UNCLAS WINNIPEG 373

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECON, ETRD, ETRN, EGEN

SUBJ: CANADIAN CARRIERS SEEK NEW U.S. AIR ROUTES

1. IN AN ATTEMPT TO COUNTERACT THE DROP IN U.S. TOURISTS TO THE NORTHERN PART OF MANITOBA DUE TO THE NORTHWEST ORIENT AIRLINES STRIKE, THE MANITOBA GOVERNMENT IS ENCOURAGING PACIFIC WESTERN AIRLINES AND TRANSAIR TO ESTABLISH AIR ROUTES FROM WINNIPEG TO MINNEAPOLIS AND CHICAGO. MANITOBA TOURISM MINISTER BOB BANMAN PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED THE MOVE DURING A ROTARY CLUB SPEECH IN THOMPSON ON AUG. 11.

2. CONOFF SPOKE WITH MR. BANMAN ON AUG. 14 AND HE CONFIRMED THAT HE HAS ALREADY CONTACTED FEDERAL AVIATION AUTHORITIES IN OTTAWA ON AN INFORMAL BASIS AND WILL TAKE UP THE MATTER FORMALLY WITH THE FEDERAL MINISTER OF TRANSPORT DURING A FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL MEETING IN SEPTEMBER. MINISTER BANMAN ALSO CONFIRMED THAT HIS MOVE WAS PROMPTED BY THE TOURIST SLUMP IN NORTHERN MANITOBA OCCASIONED BY THE NORTHWEST STRIKE. WINNIPEG, HE SAID, IS A JUMPING OFF POINT FOR FISHERMAN BOUND FOR THE NORTH OF THIS PROVINCE AND, WITH NORTHWEST ORIENT OUT, NORTH CENTRAL AIRLINES HAS NOT HAD SUFFICIENT SEATS TO MEET THE DEMAND. MR BANMAN MADE A POINT OF NOTING THAT THIS WAS THE SECOND TIME THE MANITOBA TOURISM INDUSTRY HAS SUFFERED DUE TO DIFFICULTIES WITH NORTHWEST: WITH THE PROVINCES OVERALL TOURISM DOWN 17 PERCENT FROM LAST YEAR, THE NORTHWEST STRIKE THIS YEAR IS PERCEIVED AS A SPECIAL IRRITANT.

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3. CONOFF SPOKE ON AUG. 15 WITH MR. PEZZOT, THE LOCAL VICE PRESIDENT FOR PACIFIC WESTERN AIRLINES (WHICH IS THE PARENT COMPANY FOR TRANSAIR.) MR. PEZZOT CONFIRMED MANITOBA'S POOR TOURIST TRADE AND HIS COMPANY'S LOSSES AS WELL: TRANSAIR LOST CANADIAN 150,000 DOLLARS IN JULY ALONE ON ITS NORTHERN FLIGHTS FROM WINNIPEG. MR. PEZZOT EXPLAINED THAT PWA/TRANSAIR HAD SOUGHT SPECIAL PERMISSION

FROM THE U.S. CAB TO MAKE THE MINNEAPOLIS/CHICAGO HOPS DURING THE
NORTHWEST STRIKE BUT THAT PERMISSION WAS WITHHELD DUE TO TRANSAIR S
LACK OF A TRANS-BORDER LICENSE. PWA/TRANSAIR HAS ALSO APPROACHED
AIR CANADA TO REQUEST PERMISSION TO EXERCISE THAT AIRLINES CHICAGO-
WINNIPEG OPTION GRANTED SOME YEARS AGO: AIR CANADA HAS NOT YET
RESPONDED. IN ANY EVENT, PWA/TRANSAIR NOW PLANS TO PUSH
FOR WINNIPEG-CHICAGO AND WINNIPEG- MINNEAPOLIS ROUTES AT THE NEXT
U.S. - CANADA BILATERAL AIR TALKS.
CARPENTER

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NNN

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